

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1857.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

The Message is inordinately long. As we predicted, the President declines against the banking system, but advises no radical remedy for it. The constitutionality of State banks is admitted, and there is no hope of reform in their management, he assumes, except in State legislation. All that he says of the evils of banking has been much better said in the newspapers.

The Central American Question, after some discussion, is disposed of with the remark that Great Britain has lately made new overtures, in a friendly spirit, which are taken into consideration.

The tone of the Message towards Great Britain is civil, but towards France and Russia, cordial. As to Spain, there is the usual budget of grievances; and lo! the Amistad claim is urged upon Congress. Our other foreign relations are peaceful enough.

The Kansas Question he reiterates the views expressed in his reply to the Silliman Letter. He expatiates on popular sovereignty, thinks the example set in Minnesota of voting on the Constitution a good one, took it for granted the Convention in Kansas would follow it, therefore instructed Governor Walker accordingly, thinks however the Kansas-Nebraska Act did not bind the Convention to submit the whole Constitution, rejoices that at last it decided to submit the only question it has, hopes now the master will be settled, and if the People of Kansas do not vote, the fault will be their own. The fundamental point of difference between himself and Walker he thus sums over, and is totally silent as to the course of the Governor.

He proclaims his purpose to suppress the Mormon rebellion, and asks for four additional regiments.

He commits himself to the policy of a Pacific railroad, and rather favors a Southern route. Ten additional war steamers are recommended. His discourses against land speculation. He thinks it well enough at present to the Tarriff alone. Possibly a resort to Treasury notes may become necessary.

This is the sum and substance of the Message.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE IN THE SENATE.

Mr. Douglas, the conclusion of the reading of the message in the Senate last Tuesday, took occasion, promptly and decidedly, to express his opposition to the President's position on the Kansas Question. Mr. Stuart, of Michigan, concurred with him. Mr. Trumbull quieted from Mr. Buchanan's speech on the Michigan Question, a passage fairly contradictory to his present view. Mr. Hale, Mr. Seward, and others, added a few remarks. Messrs. Brown and Davis of Mississippi, and Mr. Mason of Virginia, sustained the President, and were surprised at Mr. Douglas, who announced his purpose to speak at large the next day.

So the debate is opened, and the Lecompton Constitution bids fair to be a miracle of a healing measure, a wonderful quietus to agitation. It is said that many Western Democrats will oppose it to the bitter end.

In the House, after the reading of the journal, Mr. Houston moved to proceed to the election of a Speaker for the Thirty-fifth Congress; on which motion he demanded the previous question, which gave rise to considerable discussion.

The President's annual message was received and read from the Clerk's desk.

KANSAS AFFAIRS.

In an editorial, two weeks ago, we took the ground that the People of Kansas ought not to vote on the fraudulent question submitted to them, but call upon the Governor to convene an extra session of the Legislature, so that through that body they might give an authoritative expression of their views. Reports from Kansas say that Mr. Stanton, acting Governor, proposed to call an extra session, provided he could have an assurance that the Legislature would refrain from general legislation. Another report states that Governor Walker hesitated at such a step, because he was uncertain whether the new or old Legislature would meet under such a call. These reports are unsatisfactory.

The House of Representatives is elected for one year, and the Governor certainly ought to know when its term of service begins and expires. It does not expire till the first of January, unless a simple statement of this fact would justify his refusal to call an extra session. But, if this be the fact, are we to think of the report that the Acting Governor was willing to issue a call, provided there should be no general legislation?

Meanwhile, we are assured that Gov. Walker persists in his opposition to the action of the Lecompton Convention, and is determined to do all he can to defeat it. He thinks he will be sustained by a majority of the Democratic Party, and a majority of the People of the country.

The position of Mr. Douglas is a subject of various speculation. The Republicans may be assured of one fact—he will not act with them, or separate himself from his Party: but in his Party, his ambition is always to be a leader. If he do not sustain the course of Mr. Buchanan in relation to the Lecompton Constitution, he will endeavor so to manage his opposition, as, while saving his interests with the Northern Democracy, he shall lose nothing with the Southern. His relations to the former constrain him to oppose the action of the Calhoun Convention, but there are many questions of equal if not greater interest to the Southern men, on which his cooperation with them may be all important.

It may be desirable to organize as a State New Mexico, which has elected a delegate on the Slavery issue, and which is believed by the Slave Power to be controlled by its supporters. It is desirable to organize two or three more Territories in the slaveholding section, as the germ of future States, Arizona and the Indian Territory among them. Now suppose Mr. Douglas should embrace all these subjects in his programme, would the South take deadly offence at an effort to enable the People of Kansas to form a State Constitution?

The People of Kansas thus far are acting wisely. They seem cool, but determined. We do not believe they will injure their cause by violence. The time for the last resort has not yet come. They have the numerical force; they have the Territorial Government; it is not certain that Congress will accept the Lecompton Constitution; the probabilities on the whole are against it; at all events, it cannot be forced through both Houses until after the first of January, the time fixed for the meeting of the new Kansas Legislature. The Free State men, therefore, have every reason to be calm, hopeful, and resolute. They will not vote at the election ordered on the 20th December; nor do we believe that they will resort to any violent measures to prevent it; but, we trust that they will appoint Committees of Vigilance at all the polls, and be out in full force, to take notice exactly of what is done, and to expose what ever fraudulent transactions may be attempted. The Legislature which will meet in January

will of course take instant measures for appropriating Congress of the will of the People, and preparing to propose for the vindication of the People's rights. If Congress should reject the Lecompton Constitution, well and good. If not—it if should accept it, and the attempt be then made to cram it down the throats of the majority of the People of the Territory, we do not know what course the Legislature might adopt; but we do not believe that it would submit to any such outrage, and no American who reveres the patriots of 1776 could condemn their resistance. The doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance are fit only for slaves.

Half the Democratic journals of the free States have less disposition to do justice to Kansas than this slave State press.

Prof. O. S. Fowler, widely known as a lecturer on phrenology and physiology, and practical delineator of character, is this winter on a professional tour through the South, and has arrived in this city. The course of lectures which he has commenced has been, thus far, greatly attended, considering the conservative character of this community. We are gratified to find this fact, and we hope that he may continue to meet with liberal patronage.

PUT NOT YOUR TRUST IN PRESIDENTS.

The letter-writer has had it for a week past that Governor Walker would be dismissed from office by President Buchanan; that he would not send in his name for the Senate to act upon. But the letter-writer are a very uncertain set of gentlemen, and their reports may be without sufficient foundation. It matters not; still, he becomes everybody, in view of the fate of Kansas. We are gratified to find this fact, and we hope that he may continue to meet with liberal patronage.

EXTRA SESSION OF THE KANSAS LEGISLATURE.

The Kansas journals call loudly for an extra session of the Legislature, to provide for the present emergency. Authority to call such a session is found in the thirteenth section of the organic act, and in the following words:

"Provided, That there shall be an extra session of the Legislature annually, unless, on an extraordinary occasion, the Governor shall call the same to meet at the legislature together."

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

A " extraordinary occasion" has certainly arrived, and no person will doubt the right or duty of the Governor to advise with the Legislature on a contingency like the present.

"But one of our cautious readers inquires— "If an extra session of the Legislative Assembly is to be convened, would not the old Convention be superseded?" We answer not by any means. The 22d section of the organic act provides for the election of a Legislative Assembly at "such time * * * as the Governor shall appoint and direct." A preceding section of the organic act provides that "the term of service of the Council shall be two years, and the term of service for a member of the House of Representatives shall commence one year." The first election for these officers was held on the 30th of March, 1855, under Governor Reeder's proclamation. It follows that the Council and the House of Representatives were elected on the 30th of March, 1855, and those elected to supersede them must have dated the commencement of their term of service back to the time when the others' term of service expired. Of course, then, each branch of the Legislature, just elected, date back its term of office to the 10th of March last; and the House will expire on the 30th of March next.

If, on the 1st of April next, Kansas remains a Territory, unless provision is made for a new election, it will be without a Legislature, according to this mode of reckoning.

THE NEW YORK CITY POST OFFICE.

The new Washington city post office will be opened in a few days. It is a beautiful building.

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THE NORTHERN PRESS.

From Forney's Press.

LET THE MAJORITY RULE.

It is astonishing how a great principle breaks down all opposition. It is like the resistless advance of a conquering army. It is more for its works enduring triumphs, and yields perpetual sway, than for its mere force, or force, for that it breaks. The more it is opposed, the more certain it is to succeed. Neither principled nor powers can destroy it. When the great principle of popular sovereignty was enunciated in the Nebraska bill of 1854, it encountered a torrent of opposition. The administration, and the party to the North, were arrayed against it. We believe that its refusal to allow the people of the Territory to vote on the Constitution as a whole will receive the emphatic condemnation of the people of the country, and that it will be so emphatically repudiated that the South will not venture to set it at defiance by admitting Kansas as a State. We have of late looked carefully into the leading Democratic journals of the Northern States, with a view to gather their sentiments on this subject, and it gives us pleasure to say, that they are all in favor of the extreme Southern wing. Let us watch and see if the Democratic party does not yet revolutionize itself on this question of Slavery.

This conviction and assurance has been fairly submitted and fairly adopted. The effort to force a Constitution distasteful to the people upon them, must prove futile, and not be countenanced by the South, that established the doctrine of popular government, and are bound to see it equitably enforced.

From the Buffalo Advertiser, (Out-Law Whig) Nov. 17.

The late news from Kansas is of a character to arrest attention. The Convention for forming a State Constitution adjourned on Saturday, the 7th inst., having completed its work. No provision was made, in the course of the session, for the admission of the Constitution, but the Convention decided to submit the article relating to Slavery. The people of Kansas have as clear a right to decide on the other parts of the organic law, under the Constitution, as to live and let live, to say whether they are to live and let live, or to submit their Constitution, at the expense of a loss of the extreme Southern wing. Let us watch and see if the Democratic party does not yet revolutionize itself on this question of Slavery.

From the Lexington Observer.

LETTER FROM COL. BENTON.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 1, 1857.

To George Robertson, Esq., Lexington, Ky.

My Dear Sir:—I have read with infinite gratification your publication in the *National Intelligencer*, on the decision of the Supreme Court on the Missouri Compromise act, and as I have done, with the most interest, the *Examination*, in the eighth volume of that periodical, now in the press, in New York; and also in an "Examination" which I have made of the same branch of the decision, in a thin octavo of 200 pages, likewise now in the same press, and quickly to appear. This decision is the point in which the Supreme Court has, in the Constitution, and to the self-extension of the Constitution to Territories—the heaviest political blow that ever fell upon my heart, and left me in a state of total impotency of remaining silent under it. I view it as you do—alas!—as a verdict in my favor, that they thought the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional. A miserable mass of *Concord*, as this was, its authority would not have been resisted, had it not forced the *ballot box*. But this fear has proved alike its own guilt, and awakened the public disunionists and renegades, used his name and power for their own audacious and criminal purposes.

Respectfully, THOMAS H. BENTON.

EXTRACTS FROM BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE.

THE DEMOCRACY AND KANSAS.

The Administration and the Democratic party have been successful heretofore in dodging a direct issue upon the Kansas question. But they seem to be caught at last, and just, too, when they thought themselves safe.

The *Examiner* of Alton's *Call* has come in, and creates quite a disturbance among the representatives of Democratic opinion.
The *Washington Union*, the central Administration organ, committed itself at once, in a grand *feu de joie* of language, to the same plan.

The Democratic papers reject it, and show independence and determination in their articles.

As an evidence of the great feeling of opposition to the doings of the late Constitutional Convention of Kansas, which has been excited by the act of that body in refusing to commit their own entire work to the people, whose servants they are, we take the following expressions of sententious, which have just reached us by the mail:

From the Albany Atlas and Argus, Nov. 17—Democratic State paper of New York.

The only question for Congress is, has the application for admission, and the Constitution accompanying it, been received by the appropriate committee, who are to consider it?—Is it made?—On this point Congress should have affirmative evidence. It should be satisfied that the people approve what is demanded in their name. If not satisfied, it is the duty of Congress to send back the application to the Federal Government to the present day.

Appling these principles to Kansas, Congress should be satisfied that her people desire admission with the Constitution presented. If not satisfied on that point, the master should be sent back for further evidence from the people by the mail.

Should a Constitution be presented from Kansas, sanctioning Slavery, without having been submitted to, or approved by the people, we not see how it will be possible for Congress to be satisfied with it?—A miserably bad one.

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As an evidence of the great feeling of opposition to the doings of the late Constitutional Convention of Kansas, which has been excited by the act of that body in refusing to commit their own entire work to the people, whose servants they are, we take the following expressions of sententious, which have just reached us by the mail:

From the Albany Atlas and Argus, Nov. 17—Democratic State paper of New York.

The only question for Congress is, has the application for admission, and the Constitution accompanying it, been received by the appropriate committee, who are to consider it?—Is it made?—On this point Congress should have affirmative evidence. It should be satisfied that the people approve what is demanded in their name. If not satisfied, it is the duty of Congress to send back the application to the Federal Government to the present day.

Appling these principles to Kansas, Congress should be satisfied that her people desire admission with the Constitution presented. If not satisfied on that point, the master should be sent back for further evidence from the people by the mail.

Should a Constitution be presented from Kansas, sanctioning Slavery, without having been submitted to, or approved by the people, we not see how it will be possible for Congress to be satisfied with it?—A miserably bad one.

The *Democrat* of Alton's *Call* has come in, and creates quite a disturbance among the representatives of Democratic opinion.
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